dying to live

Jessie Penn-Lewis

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DYING TO LIVE

BY

JESSIE PENN-LEWIS

There are two things which the Church wants: more death and more life—more death in order to live; more life in order to die

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CHAPTER I

"THE WAY OF DELIVERANCE"

" Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death ? " (Romans vi. 3, A.V.)

HOW to get free from the bondage of sin and self is the great question in many hearts. Such a freedom looks impossible, but " the things that are impossible with man are possible with God ".

The Word of God says: " One died, for all, *therefore all died*; and He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him " (2 Corinthians v. 14, 15).

When we first came to Christ with the guilt and burden of our sins, deliverance looked just as impossible, but as we took God at His word, the Holy Spirit bore witness, and proved to us that He could do what seemed the " impossible " thing. Let us go back to that first stage of deliverance and see how it was done.

1. We were convicted of sin.
2. We struggled to get peace, and looked inward for relief, but all in vain.
3. At the point of despair we were shown that deliverance had to come from some power outside of ourselves.
4. At last we looked away to Christ and saw Him on Calvary's Cross bearing our sins in His own body on the tree.
5. We ceased from struggling, and resting on His finished work of atonement, found peace through the blood of His Cross. The Holy Spirit applied the power of the blood

and we had " no more conscience of sins " (Hebrews x. 2). The " impossible " thing was done. Justified by faith we knew we were at peace with God (Romans v. 1).

6. New life from God was imparted to us by the Holy Ghost, and He bore witness with our spirit that we were children of God (Romans viii. 16).

How clearly these steps are repeated in another stage, as God leads us on to know deliverance from the bondage of self and sin.

1. The Spirit of God first convicts us of the bondage of sin and the loathsomeness of the self-hood. (See 1 Corinthians iii. 1-3).
2. We struggle to conquer our sins and deliver ourselves; we cry to God, and yet victory appears more and more hopeless. The enemy taunts us, " It is not for you," or, " There is no such thing as deliverance". We seek to surrender more fully to God, but fall again and again; we long to do God's will, but the more we try the more we seem to do the things contrary to our desires. The loathsomeness of sin increases, and its power seems greater, and we are put into circumstances that bring out the very worst part of us, until at last we loathe ourselves, and cry, " Oh wretched man . . . who shall deliver me? " (Romans vii. 24).
3. At this point of bitter despair and darkness the Spirit of God shows us that deliverance must come from another source, and that *self* cannot conquer self or sin.
4. The Spirit of God then leads us again to Calvary, and throws light upon the meaning of the death of the Lord for the deliverance of all who trust in Him. He leads to the written Word, " One died for all, *therefore all died* " (2 Corinthians v. 14), and we see that the Saviour carried the *sinner* to the Cross, as well as his sins, and that we have *died* in Him to sin and to the old life of self. We then consent to account ourselves crucified with Christ, and

agree to live the crucified life, " Alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life also of Jesus may be manifested " (2 Corinthians iv. 11).

5. " *Planted together* in the likeness of His death " (Romans vi. 5), as having died with Him, we cease from our own work (efforts) and enter into rest (Hebrews iv. 10), saying in dependence upon the Holy Ghost, " I *have been* crucified with Christ " (Galatians ii. 20).
6. The life of God is now imparted in fuller measure, and the Holy Spirit reveals the living Christ indwelling the soul, henceforth enabling the believer, moment by moment, to live unto Him.

But I do not yet *feel* all this, someone says ! Nevertheless, this is the message of Calvary and the resurrection of the Christ, and we must come to the right *position* in the sight of God, by faith in His word ere we can prove it in experience.

Have we been brought by the Holy Spirit to utter despair of ourselves, and are now ready to own that in us dwelleth no good thing ? Then let us now in simple trust:

1. Look to Calvary once again, and see that the Saviour did carry *us* in Himself to His Cross—as well as our sins (Romans vi. 3; Galatians ii. 20).
2. Take our place in Him on the Cross, and say that by the choice of our will we have died with Him (Colossians iii. 3; Galatians ii. 20).
3. Then day by day, as any trace of the old " natural " life is revealed, yield it to the Cross, and reckon it crucified with Him (Romans viii. 13).
4. Count upon the Living Christ in us to manifest His life continually.

If we quietly thus rest upon the word of God, " *Ye died* " (Colossians iii. 3), and claim the severing power of the death of Christ over every unveiling of the " old Adam " life or old bonds of sin, the Holy Spirit will at once " make to die " the

" doings " of the body, and we shall walk in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

Moreover, in the hour of temptation when Satan tries to throw back upon us old sins, or workings of the old life in any form, we must, by the " word of our testimony " that we are crucified with Christ, claim the victory Christ won over Satan on the Cross, and refuse to yield to his power.

But can our death with Christ be made real to us in one moment ?

We can take our place as crucified with Christ in a moment of time, but the Spirit of God must deal with the old life day by day, and we then surrender it to the Cross as it is revealed.

Can " self " rise again ?

1. After we have seen our death with Christ, there probably will arise fresh manifestations of " self " to be dealt with, for as the work of God deepens in us, the Holy Spirit will reveal depths we had no conception of, if we cry " let Him not spare ! "
2. Sometimes the adversary may imitate " self " to make us lose our faith that we are crucified with Christ.

What are we to do when this happens ?

1. Stand upon the word of the Living God, and say " It is written ". " I have been crucified with Christ "—His death is mine.
2. Hand over every trace of self—real or apparent—to the Holy Ghost for Him to deal with, and refuse to have anything to do with it.
3. Believe that God does deliver *now*, in the face of all appearances to the contrary, and hide in Christ on the Cross from the enemy, counting upon the shelter of the blood of Calvary.

Does fellowship with the death of Christ mean no " feeling " ?

The Lord has not promised to turn us into stones. In union with Christ in His death we are delivered from selfishness; from *self*-sensitiveness (i.e., being wounded for self),

but not from sensitiveness for others. Now there will be tears for others, but none because *we* are hurt ! However much we suffer we do not resent it and retort as we used to, but we do *feel* the pain and see the hand of God in all that comes to us, for our good (Romans viii. 28).

If we have " died ", how can we be tempted ?

If Christ suffered being tempted, and was tempted in all points like as we are, we shall not cease to be tempted. Galatians ii. 20 gives the secret. " I " crucified, " Christ lives in *me*." " I "—the selfish ; " I "—nailed to His cross ; " me " —the personal " *me* " remains—to be tempted and tried.

What about " dying daily " ?

If we look at the context of the passage where this sentence occurs, we shall see that it relates to Paul's exposure of his physical life to hazard continually. It does not seem to refer to " spiritual " death at all. In 2 Corinthians iv. 10, we read of " always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus ", and this describes the crucified life, when the Spirit of God brings us daily into deeper conformity to the death of the Lord, and which follows our apprehension of our death with Christ according to the Word of God.

If I fall into sin, after taking the place of death, what then ?

This is the most critical point of all. Above all things we must be honest with God, and call sin, *sin*, never attempting to cover it over, or to reconcile our failure with our past " experience ". 1 John i. 9 is always needed, and as we confess any sin we must simply re-take our place, " crucified with Christ," and ask to be drawn into closer fellowship with Him and kept by the power of His life in us continually.

What about growth ?

It is only as we apprehend our union with Christ in His death, according to Romans vi. 3-6, that there can be real " growth in grace ", for it is the *divine* life which is to grow as the earth life is continually reckoned crucified.

1. Let us beware of testifying, "*I* am dead," for it is drawing attention to ourselves, and is "I" in a subtle form! We may speak of the Lord and all that *He* is, but it is for Him to bear witness to what He has done for us. Let us welcome also every criticism—kind and unkind—so that we may learn to know ourselves, and seek deeper deliverance. By this means the outward life will soon be brought into conformity to the inner life, and discrepancy between lip and life be avoided. Beware of *dogmatising* over spiritual truths. Let God bear witness, and then we need never assert anything about ourselves. 1 Corinthians viii. 2, is always true!

2. Let us never seek "experiences", but leave ourselves in the hand of God for Him to do as it pleases Him, leading us in any path that He may choose.

3. Let us take care lest we get out of soul-rest in seeking further blessing. God cannot work whilst we are anxious, even about our spiritual experience. Let us take Him at His Word, and leave the *fulfilment* of it to Him.

4. Let us never judge God's Word by our experience, for the Word of God is true whatever our experience may be.

5. We should not seek "consciousness" of death with Christ. "The words are a contradiction in terms. If we had literally passed out of this world into the next we should not *feel* dead. We should only be conscious of a new, wonderful life. Our consciousness of death would be negative, the old bonds would be unable to fetter us."

6. We must beware of having faith in our "reckoning", rather than in the God Who *undertakes to make the reckoning true*!

7. Let us beware also of "trying to grasp" the truth of God, for this is usually mental effort; and hinders the Holy Spirit from doing His work. Yield to the Holy Ghost, and He will make the truth *grasp us*.

8. The Lord has never promised that we shall be able to look within, and say to our own satisfaction that "self" is gone. Whilst we really believe God's Word that we have

died with Christ, and count upon Christ as the Living One to manifest His life through us, *others* will see that it is true, whilst we are occupied with Christ.

9. When the Holy Spirit has applied the death of Christ experimentally, and brought the soul into real emancipation, it remains to be a *momentary attitude* maintained by abiding in Him. There need be no effort to " abide " if we count upon the Holy Ghost to keep us abiding unconsciously.

10. When we step out upon God's Word, we must take heed that we do not look within to see if the work is done, and *watch* the " operation of God " (Colossians ii. 12). As we rest *on His Word*, the work is being wrought in the depths of our being by the mighty inward Operator. If we begin to question, " have I died with Christ or have I not ? " He has to wait until He can get us to look away from ourselves, and rest upon the Word again.

11. Let us be prepared that the adversary will dispute every inch of ground. The devil is NOT dead, for when we hide in Christ upon the Cross, he seems more alive than ever, but let the Living Christ Who dwells within guard us from all his subtleties, then it will be victory all the way, for he *is* a defeated foe.

12. Remember it is vain to ask God to set us free from ourselves if we *retain one single thing that ministers to the self-life.* An honest desire to let Christ entirely possess us, and a practical committing to the Cross of all that is revealed, will bring full deliverance. Let us remember, too, that in God's dealing with us, He will allow a " trial " to remain until we cease to writhe under it. We may as well say, " Yes, Lord," at the first !

13. Finally, the " end of the Lord " is LIFE—life *out of death.* " If we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection " (Romans vi. 5, R.V.).

Let us trust Him to do His work whilst we yield to His dealings. Trust Him implicitly, and obey promptly.

CHAPTER 2

THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

"*I beseech you therefore . . . by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship*" (Romans xii. 1, m.)*

NOTE the word "*therefore*" pointing back to the message of the preceding chapters (omitting chapters ix, x, and xi, which may be read as a parenthesis). Romans xii is an appeal following the triumphant finale of Romans viii.

(1) THE GROUND-WORK OF A TRANSFORMED LIFE

"I beseech you . . . by the mercies of God" (Romans xii. 1).

The "mercies of God" in brief.

1. *Justification through Christ*
   "Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . Reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Romans v. 1, 10, m).
2. *Identification with Christ*
   "We who died to sin . . . we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized *into His* death" (Romans vi. 2, 3).
3. *Union with Christ*
   "Dead through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to Him Who was raised from the dead" (Romans vii. 4).
4. *Freedom in Christ*
   "No condemnation . . . in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free . . . ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (Romans viii. 1, 2, 9).

(2) THE CALL TO PRESENT THE BODY

1. "*Therefore . . . present your bodies*" (Romans xii. 1).

* *References from Revised Version except where stated*

(*This corresponds to Romans vi.* 13. "*Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments.*")

2. *The body as a sacrifice*

"Present your bodies as a living sacrifice" (Romans xii. 1).

(*The body must be under the control of the Spirit of life, that it may be the vehicle for the manifestation of that life. Compare the sacrifice of praise offered through the lips, Hebrews xiii.* 15, *and the "spiritual sacrifices" in* 1 *Peter ii.* 5.)

3. *The body set apart for God*

"Your bodies . . . holy, well-pleasing to God" (Romans xii. 1, *m*).

(*The earthen vessel is sacred because of the Treasure it holds.* "*Your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Ghost which is in you . . . glorify God therefore in your body*" 1 *Corinthians vi.* 19, 20, m.

"*The altar sanctifieth the gift.*" *See Matthew xxiii.* 19.)

4. *The presentation of the body described as worship*

"Present your bodies . . . which is your spiritual worship" (Romans xii. 1, m).

(Compare Hebrews x. 19, 22. The three departments (1 Thessalonians v. 23) of our complex being are so inter-dependent that God does not separate them. The "body washed with pure water", may be spiritually considered as the body brought into subjection, and its actions into accord, with the Word of God.)

(3) THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

1. *Its negative side*

"Be not conformed to this world" (Romans xii. 2, A.V.).

(If crucified with Christ, we are not to consider ourselves as now "living in the world", Colossians ii. 20. Galatians vi. 14, must be our attitude to the world-spirit. The Cross stands between. See Galatians i. 4.)

2. *Its positive side*

" Be ye transformed " (Romans xii. 2).

(" *Transfigured* ! " an earthen vessel so illuminated by the light within, that it is being " transformed continually " into the image of the Lord from heaven.)

3. *How the transforming is done*

" By the renewing of your mind " (Romans xii. 2).

(Not from without to the inward, but from within to the outward, by the continual renewal of the indwelling Spirit of life. A new mind as well as new desires in the heart.)

4. *The key to the practical walk*

" That ye may prove what is the . . . will of God " (Romans xii. 2).

(The mercies of God, the presenting of the body, the transformation of the whole life, are for this end ! Simply to fulfil God's purposes, and do His will. Conybeare renders the sentence, " that by an unerring test you may discern the will of God "; the same phrase occurs in Philippians i. 9, " discerning what we ought to do, and not to do.")

(4) THE TRANSFORMED LIFE IN PRACTICE

1. *The attitude towards oneself* (Romans xii. 3-21).

" Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but . . . soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith " (verse 3).

(Be natural and simple, be what you are, and where you are spiritually, mentally, socially; and do not strain to walk by another's light, or faith, or experience.)

2. *The attitude towards other children of God*

" Even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office; so we, who are many, are one body in Christ . . . having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us " (verses 4, 5, 6).

(The full revelation of God is not given only to one member of the body. Have respect to God's grace in others. You are only a part of a whole ! Read carefully 1 Corinthians xii and note that the feeble members (verse 22) are as necessary as the strong ones.)

3. *The exercise of the gifts of grace*

(a) *The grace of prophecy*

" Having gifts differing . . . whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of the faith " (verse 6, m).

(If you are entrusted with the Divine message, speak according to the proportion given you, and do not go beyond the measure of your knowledge.)

(b) *The grace of ministry*

" Or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry " (verse 7).

(c) *The grace of teaching*

" Or he that teacheth, to his teaching " (verse 7).

(d) *The grace of exhorting*

" Or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting " (verse 8).

(Whatever may be your special grace, give your whole being to it; some only give their *time.* See 1 Thessalonians ii. 8.)

(e) *The grace of giving*

" He that giveth, let him do it with liberality " (verse 8).

(This grace needs special care that it is fulfilled with " singleness " (R.V. m.) of the heart, with liberality of mind, and " simplicity " (A.V. m.) of purpose, so as to be in accord with Matthew vi. 1.)

(f) *The grace of ruling*

" He that ruleth, with diligence " (verse 8).

(The Spirit gives special fitness for " ruling ". It must be done with as much diligence and faithfulness as preaching the gospel. The transformed life in men in authority will reach souls who will not listen to the

preaching. " Let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God " (1 Corinthians vii. 24).

(g) *The grace of showing mercy*

" He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness " (verse 8).

(This is also a gift, and there are some to whom it is given as a life-work. Channels for the mercy of God, let them show mercy cheerfully, not severely.)

(5) THE TRANSFORMED LIFE IN VARIOUS DETAILS

" Let love be without hypocrisy " (verse 9).

(*Concerning love, be genuine.*)

" Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good " (verse 9).

(*Hate sin, and don't trifle with it.*)

" Be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honour preferring one another " (verse 10).

(*Give others the first place; be kind and courteous.*)

" Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord " (verse 11, A.V.).

(" Let our people also learn to profess honest occupations for necessary wants," Titus iii. 14, m., said Paul, and he did not hesitate, apostle though he was, to work with his own hands that he might not be burdensome to the Corinthians. 2 Corinthians xi. 9. This dignifies the " honest occupations ", and shows that the Lord may be served fervently in business, as well as by preaching the gospel.)

" Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer " (verse 12).

(*This is applicable to business life as well as all other circumstances, and is to be the spirit in which all trials are met. Hopeful, patient, prayerful.*)

" Communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality " (verse 13).

(*Caring for others in the household of faith* (*see John iii.* 17) *and generous in hospitality. See* 3 *John verse* 6.)

" Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another" (verses 14, 15, 16).

(*Do not retaliate, but conquer with love. Be sympathetic, glad to see others happy, and tender with their griefs. Seek the unity of the Spirit with all.*)

(6) THE TRANSFORMED LIFE IN TRUE SELF-EFFACEMENT

"Set not your mind on high things" (verse 16).
(*Be willing to be among the "nobodies".*)

"Be contented with mean things" (verse 16, A.V. m.).
(*Be thankful for everything that comes. Psalm xxxiv. 1.*)

"Be not wise in your own conceits" (verse 16).
(*Don't think you know everything!*)

"Render to no man evil for evil" (verse 17).
(*Don't pay back people in "their own coin".*)

"Take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men" (verse 17).
(*Think of how things look to others!*)

"As much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men" (verse 18).
(*Be peace-makers, not peace-breakers. Refuse to touch the "bone of contention" at home, and in the church.*)

"Avenge not yourselves . . . give place unto the wrath of God" (verse 19, m.).
(*Beware of self-defence. Hush! not a word. Remember Luke xviii. 7.*)

TRUE CHRIST-LIKENESS

"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (verse 20, 21).
(*Those who hate you do the most for, and melt all opposition with the fire of heavenly love. Matthew v. 44, 45.*)

CHAPTER 3

"HOW DEEP SHALL THE CROSS GO?"

"*The Spirit . . . fathoms all things, even the depths of God*"
(1 Corinthians ii. 10, Conybeare)

THE theme of the sixth of Romans may be described as "The Two-fold Message of the Cross". This can be condensed into the two basic facts declared by the Apostle Paul in connection with Calvary. (1) "*Christ died*"; (2) "*We died*". The "reign of death" over the whole human race is proof of the fall of man. Death came into the world through sin. In Romans v. we are told that "Christ died" a substitutionary death for us, so that we might become sharers of His risen life. In Romans vi. we learn how to obtain that Risen Life in experience. If Christ died *for* us so that we might obtain His life, "we died" *with* Him, to enable us actually to receive it. We must be "grafted into the likeness of His death". Three times Paul uses the words "*His death*", and then he says, "*We who died*". Here we have clearly stated the identification of the sinner with the Saviour.

What does this death with Christ mean? First, it is a death to SIN—sin as a master and a tyrant—*sin*, not sins. It *means what God means* for us in the crucifixion of our "old man" with Christ (Romans vi. 6). The Holy Spirit is ready to apply it to the depths of our inner being, until sin loses its mastery at every point. It goes deeper than the cutting off of visible and external things. It enters the innermost core of the being, until there is complete liberty from the bondage and mastery of sin, a work so deep, done by the Eternal Spirit Himself, that the inner life centre is changed, and the soul is put back to its right centre in the Eternal God.

How deep is that death to go? is the question I bring to you to-day. When the Spirit of God has done this radical work in the application of the *death* of Christ, it seems to be something deeper down than the cleansing of the heart. It is a cutting off that can only be expressed by all that the word "death" implies. A severance of the believer from a master "called" Sin—a severance made by the Spirit of God at the inner centre of the man, which sets him free at the centre to obey God. It does not say that henceforth he is sinless, or has no sin in him, but he is cut off by the application of the death of his Substitute, Who died in his place at Calvary, so that it is as if he had actually "died" so that his old master Sin has no power or claim upon him. (See Romans vi. 17, 18.)

This is why the apostle so remarkably interchanges in Romans vi.—the Magna Charta of the Church of Christ—the words "HIS DEATH" and "WE DIED", as if it meant one and the same thing, which spiritually it does in God's marvellous plan of redemption.

Beloved, do you not see that it is just here you must get on a clear foundation? You may be dealing with "sins" until you are weary with the battle. You may have sought heart-cleansing, and had a measure of respite from the sickening conflict. *The work must go deeper still.* Christ's death—"*His* death"—set up in the central depths of the inner man as a barrier, like the whirling sword at the gate of Eden, between you and the tyrant, "Sin". You have "*died* to sin", and by the powerful application of the Holy Spirit in response to your faith in the working of God (Colossians ii. 12), you are set free to "live unto God".

How deep shall it go? How deep do *you* consent that God shall go into your inner life? Do you want to be delivered from "sin"? Do you hate *sin?* Let alone for a while the remembrance of various "sins" that trouble you. Let God deal with the centre. Let Him begin deep down, and set up the barrier of death between you and the tyrant "Sin". Say, *as God declares you may,* "Crucified together with Him"

I am " no longer in bondage to sin "—and God will make it true.

How deep shall the death of Christ go in us? You say as regards " sin ", as deep as God can go for my deliverance. So far, good. But there are other results to this initial setting up in the core of our being, the barrier of Christ's death against sin. There is much else to be shown us involved in the death with Christ. There is a bondage to be delivered from, which Paul describes as the " law ". Look at Romans vii. 6.

" Now that *we have died* with Christ, the Law wherein we were formerly held fast has lost its hold upon us; so that we are no longer in the old bondage of the letter, but in the new service of the Spirit " (Conybeare).

Behind the tyranny of sin lies the " law ", with its whip and demands, making us know with bitterness our complete inability to obey it. God says through the " law ", " thou shalt " and " thou shalt not ", and we under the slavery of sin are helpless to obey. " But now that *we have died* . . . " the " law " loses its hold upon us. We have (with Christ) " died to sin ", and by that death we have " died " also to the demands of the Law. The days of bondage are over. Henceforth the " law " under which we once trembled is transfigured and fulfilled in us by the power of the Spirit (Romans viii. 4), for Christ Himself living in us is the fulfilment of the law. Once it was " I must " and failure—now it is " I can through Christ "—and victory.

How deep shall it go? The death of Christ set up in the centre of our being has deeper issues yet. It is for us to say to God " how deep " He shall go into the outworking of all that Calvary means in our lives. Let us read Colossians ii. 20 (*Conybeare*).

" If then when you *died with Christ* you put away the childish lessons of outward things, why, *as though you still lived* in outward things, do you submit yourselves to decrees (hold not, taste not, touch not . . .)."

How deep is the death of Christ to go in us? How deep shall the sword of the Cross cut into our lives? We have seen it is to cut us off from (1) sin as a master within us; (2) the bondage of the " law " oppressing us with legal claims;

but now it is to deliver us from (3) *all reliance upon "outward things"*, and the undue emphasis upon those things as essentials or even aids, in our worship or service of God. That Paul is speaking of the religious life of the believer is to be seen by the context of this passage. "Conscience" questions, which trouble and divide the whole body of Christ. "Ought I" to "eat" this, or "drink" that? What about "Sabbaths"? Is the "Sabbath" ordained in Eden binding upon the "new creation in Christ", brought into being through Calvary and the Resurrection (2 Corinthians v. 17)? What about certain "decrees" based upon "precepts and doctrines of men"—generally negative, such as "hold not, taste not, touch not" certain things, which, after all, are "all made to be consumed in the using"?

These "precepts", said the apostle, have a "show of wisdom" in "humiliation", and "chastenings of the body", but they "are of no value to check the indulgence of fleshy passions", i.e. the "*flesh*" *remains the same underneath*, in spite of all "humiliation and chastening of the body".

God's way is better than this. He presses deep into the centre of the man with the sword of the Cross, and says through His apostle, when "*you died with Christ*", it was to all these "*outward things*". None of them are essential to salvation, or even aids to the true inner life. The "flesh" was put to death in Christ for you (Galatians v. 24), then why rely upon "aids" which really are of "no value" to check the "indulgence of the flesh", for it will only change its form, and break out in another way. In fact *the puffed up "fleshly mind"* (Colossians ii. 18) *is at the back of all these schemes to conquer the flesh*, and thus it is made even more active through the very means taken to bring it under control!

But, says someone, are no "outward things" of help to the true life of God in the soul of man? Paul tells us when they may be so. *They belong only to "childhood"*! They are "childish lessons"—which will fall away at the Cross of Christ, when its deep meaning dawns upon the soul. The Colossians were disturbed over "precepts", "sabbaths,"

etc., and they were condemning each other as vigorously as the Christians of the twentieth century do over the "rights" and the "wrongs" of various "outward things"! They are all "shadows", "shadows," "shadows," cried the apostle. Aim at the *substance* (Colossians ii. 17), and you will soon know the mind of the Lord for you, as to how to deal with the "shadows" in practice.*

It is instructive to see that Paul did not attempt to settle their "conscience questions" for the Colossians. He takes them to the only place where they can be seen in true perspective. Away from Calvary, the only place which a sinner saved by grace has on earth—the place of death with Christ—these questions are magnified all out of proportion, for "outward things" which are small are made to overshadow the things that matter.

Back to Calvary, child of God, back to Calvary! Put away, at least for the time being, all your debates, and let God cut to the core with the Cross, and cut you off from all the various "views" concerning external matters of the Christian life. "Put away" the "lessons" of your Christian childhood, and die with Christ, then a veil will fall away from your inner vision, and you will see light in God's light, you will learn that "nothing availeth but a new creation", and know that "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans xiv. 17). This will take from you the disposition to judge and condemn others in matters which are not essential to salvation, and you will cease to allow them to become barriers between you and other members of the Body of Christ.

How deep shall the death of Christ go in us? Deeper yet. Deeper yet. Look at Colossians iii. 2, 3 (Conybeare) with footnote.

"Set your heart on things above, not on things earthly; for *you have died*, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

* Romans xiv. very clearly illustrates this.

How deep? So deep that your life is now in heaven " with Christ in God ". This must be the reasonable sequence. As the death of Christ cuts deeper, the life of union with Christ must grow stronger. As the mastery of sin ceases, and the bondage of " must " gives place to loving obedience; as the soul is more cut off from reliance upon anything outside of Christ (or insidiously *added* to the completeness of Christ's finished work at Calvary), so the believer finds his life more and more lived in " heaven ". The things that once troubled him sink down to their right place and he no longer tithes " mint, and anise and cummin " (Matthew xxiii. 23), whilst blind to the weightier matters of his salvation.

How deep does this death go? So deep that the heart is now " set on things above ", not on " things earthly ". There has been no great struggle to " give up ". The death-work of the Cross has cut away " things earthly ", so that they also simply fall into their right place as subject to the will of God. Thus a true fellowship with Christ in death cuts away fanaticism, and all " extremes ", for all of this comes from the " flesh " and not from the new life in God. The light of heaven on the things of earth shows the value of things, and the way to walk according to God in the spirit. When a man dies physically, he has to leave his great possessions. If you can suppose that man is coming back to live again his life on earth, think you that his values would not be changed and he would look upon all things with different eyes? This is, *spiritually*, just what God's plan was in the identification of the sinner with the Saviour on the Cross. The death of Christ applied to the believer cuts him off from " things earthly ", so that he lives his life henceforth as one that abides in heaven.

How deep shall it go? Shall it touch your dress, your ambitions, your possessions? It is not so much your getting " victory " over these things, as *your* " *death* " *to them* in the death of Christ.

But we must *cry deeper yet*! Let us turn to 2 Timothy ii. 9-11 (Conybeare).

" I suffer as a malefactor . . . I endure all for the sake of the chosen,

that they may obtain . . . Faithful is the saying. For if *we have died* with Him we shall also live with Him. . . ."

How is it " deeper yet " in this passage? Just this, that the death of Christ has here cut into all self-interest. Treated as malefactor, the apostle cries, " I endure all *for the sake of the chosen*, that *they may obtain*. . . ." That " *they* " may obtain! Not that " I " may obtain. Who does not want a " life " that in this storm-tossed world " abides in heaven "? But to be willing to suffer as Christ suffered—as a criminal led forth to die—for the sake of others—that " they " may obtain glory and blessing. That is deeper yet. No self-interest here in spiritual attainment. Some of us know a little of what suffering *for others* means, but oh so little. There is always the temptation to " save ourselves " and come down from the Cross.

Now let us turn to 2 Corinthians v. 14, 15, and read if there is a deeper depth yet. The apostle writes:

" For the love of Christ constrains me, because I have judged that if One died for all, then *all died* (in Him) . . . that the living might live no longer unto themselves, but to Him. . . ."

How deep? So deep does the Cross cut into the inner depths of the believer, if the Holy Spirit is allowed to carry it through to its fullest extent, that really and truly he, so to speak, may be said to exist in this world only for God. If he " eats " or does not eat (Romans xiv. 21) this or that, it is for God (1 Corinthians x. 31). He does all for the glory of God and not for his own pleasure. In brief, Christ has become his All in All, the new centre of being (see 2 Corinthians v. 15, Conybeare), so that he exists for His will and pleasure.

How deep? It is for each child of God to say. " It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." There is only one thing that God cannot do for us. God will not " will " instead of us. He will work in us, and *for* us, to bring us to the point of " will-ing ", but *we must* " *will* "—i.e., set the helm of the ship by our choice.

How deep shall the death of Christ go in us? How far has the

truth of the Cross penetrated? Having cut into the personal life, has it reached our ministry and Christian service? The "world" that Paul said he was "crucified" to, and was "crucified" to him, was the religious world, according to the context of Galatians vi. 14. "They who wish to have a *good repute* in things pertaining to the flesh, . . . are forcing 'circumcision' upon you, and that only to save themselves from . . . persecution" (Galatians vi. 12, Conybeare) wrote the apostle to the Galatians. Here we have "religious reputation"; the "forcing" of views of "truth"; the counting of "converts"; the shirking of the Cross; giving in miniature a picture of the professing Church of to-day. "*This* 'world' is crucified to me and I unto [this] world" cries the apostle. "My 'boast' is only in the Cross of Christ 'which is the instrument of my crucifixion as of His'" (Lightfoot). And so it will be to every one to-day who will preach the Gospel. "NOTHING AVAILS BUT A NEW CREATION."

How deep shall it go? So deep that we die utterly to all desire for a "good repute" in "things pertaining to the flesh" in Christian service, and are content to be in the true apostolic succession of the path of Christ and His apostle.

And there is deeper yet in this marvellous Message of the Cross. Shall the death of Christ go so deep in us, that it breaks down all religious barriers between us and fellow-believers? Speaking of the barrier of religious ordinances between Jew and Gentile, the apostle writes of Christ and His Cross, in Ephesians ii. 14-16:

> "He is our Peace, Who has made both one, and broken down the wall which parted us; for *by His death* He destroyed the ground of our enmity . . . that *by His cross* He might reconcile both. . . ."

How deep does the Cross of Christ go? Deep enough to cut away all barriers caused by "ordinances" between those who look to His atoning death for salvation. What did the Cross do for "Jew" and "Gentile" but slay them both, so that out of both might be built a "New Man", neither Jew nor Gentile, but Christian? "In Christ," wrote the

apostle, " there is neither Jew nor Gentile, but Christ is all and in all."

How deep? Even yet the fathomless deeps of Calvary, able to fathom the deepest depths of the human soul, are not exhausted. 2 Corinthians iv. 10-12, and 2 Corinthians xiii. 4, open realms of possibilities in the depths of the Cross, making place for boundless inflow and outflow of the very *life of Jesus* through those who will allow the Spirit of God to " dig deep " channels in their inner lives; as well as the mighty energising of human weakness by the might of the strength of God. Let us be willing for all that the Cross means, that we may know the power of Christ's Resurrection as we become conformable to His death (Philippians iii. 10).

CHAPTER 4

"DELIVERED UNTO DEATH"

OR

How to Manifest the Life of Jesus

" *Delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh; so then death worketh in us, but life in you* " (2 Corinthians iv. 11, 12, R.V.)

IT is the plan of God that He must be allowed to work into the *lives of His messengers the truths He entrusts to them to give to others.* Written large in God's own Word lies the principle of " death " for " life " in those He sends out with His message. " Delivered unto death for Jesus' sake " is to be found in the Old Testament in David's life, and in the lives of the prophets. And just as it was with them in the foreshadowing of Calvary, and the prophetic utterances *foretelling* the Cross, so it was in the dispensation immediately following Calvary, and has been all along the line ever since. We can see it wrought into the life of Paul, and into the lives of the

martyrs, and all the servants of God who have ever been greatly used of Him. This is an aspect of the Cross which so many of us have failed to see; this principle of " death " for life which must be wrought into us ere the message of Calvary given by us becomes life to others.

This explains why there is so much preaching *about* the Cross without the power of the Cross. We may have seen clearly the substitutionary and atoning aspect of Christ's death *for* us, and not apprehended our identification with Him in that death, so that we know the power over sin which comes from knowing that we died with Him.

And again, when we have apprehended our death-position with Christ, we may have failed to see the *conformity* to His death, wherein the power of Christ's death and resurrection is wrought into us as an experience day by day. This brings into the life not only victory over sin, but the *spirit* of Calvary. The absence of this brings about the anomaly of the Cross being preached with no marks of the Calvary spirit. This is the danger of the teaching of " identification " without the consequent conformity to death which brings true power, for we may rely upon the fact that we have " died " with Christ, and assume that it is entirely wrought in us at once, not realising that " conformity to His death " follows the apprehension of identification, and must become deeper and deeper until the " fellowship of His sufferings " in the path of the Cross becomes a real experience in the life.

Just as it was with Jeremiah, so all true messengers of the Cross to-day will have Jeremiah's path and Jeremiah's experience if they are willing to follow the Lord to Calvary. For Jeremiah knew what it meant to have the Lord's path of the Cross, although it was years before Christ came to earth to die. Even as Jeremiah knew the Cross in its foreshadowing, so may we know the Cross in fellowship with the Lamb of Calvary as we proclaim Golgotha's tragedy and victory. The death of Christ can be wrought into us in a death-fellowship with the Lord, which will bring forth a life which triumphs over everything.

The passage in 2 Corinthians iv. 11, 12, R.V., is the keynote of it all. " We which live are *always delivered unto death* for Jesus' sake," writes the apostle, " that the *life* also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh; so then death worketh in us, but life in you."

How clearly we are shown that David was " delivered unto death ", as he cried, " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? " in some of his hours of suffering, so that the Holy Ghost might speak through him the prophetic utterances foreshadowing Christ's death on Calvary. A deep insight into the life of God in the soul of man opens to us as we ponder over this. We see that God works into man's innermost being the divine messages He seeks to give out through him, and does not make even a prophet a " machine ", but speaks through the heart and life prepared by Him in the furnace of suffering.

In these solemn closing days of the age the question upon many hearts is, How is the Church of Christ to be prepared to meet the Lord ? We answer, " Only by having wrought into her the very spirit and life of Jesus, in conformity to His likeness of the Lamb." Some have caught a glimpse of it. They have tasted it in measure, and have the message of it burning in their hearts now. But how is this message to be given to others, so that it may become wrought into them in power ? How is this " life of Jesus " which has come to us through fellowship with His death, to reach others ? And the answer is: We must be *willing to be* " *delivered to death* " as the prophets were. We long to carry the message of Calvary to others in all its power, but this can only be as it is wrought in us first, as in the lives of David and Jeremiah, and Paul.

Are we willing to sob out the message in our lives first, as David sobbed the twenty-second Psalm ere the Holy Ghost could speak it through him as a prophetic picture of Christ ? Yes, we must know the sobs of Calvary in the fellowship of His sufferings, just as much as David did, if the Holy Ghost is to make the message of Calvary through us life to others.

Mental light about the death of Christ will give light as we pass it on, but not life. We may be able to explain everything about identification with Christ in death to sin, and to talk of personal victory so that the hearers get victory too, but this is not *life* passing through us, for this can only be as the " fellowship of His sufferings " is wrought in us by the Holy Ghost.

The Lord Jesus said on Calvary's Cross, " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " as David said it in tears long years before. And it was at *Golgotha* that the very life of Jesus was set free for a dying world. " *Always delivered unto death . . . so then* death worketh in us, and life in you," writes Paul. Is this a cry for " power " ? No ! For happiness ? *No* ! " Always delivered unto *death.*" Have you, dear child of God, ever asked God for *fellowship with Christ in death ?* You have asked for *power*, but the answer is, " Always delivered unto death ". *Always* ! Not only now and then. " But I thought," you say, " when I came up to the Cross, and saw that I was identified with Christ in death, that I then passed on to resurrection ground in union with Him, and on to the ascension life. I thought the Cross was then behind me, and I had only to maintain my position ! " Yes, that is true, but it does not embody all the truth. 2 Corinthians iv. 10-12 and Philippians iii. 10, have a vital place in the spiritual life of all who follow on to know the Lord. " Reckon yourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God " (Romans vi. 11); and " *Ye died*, and your life is hid with Christ in God " (Colossians iii. 3), is position-truth, which we must stand upon as rock ground daily, but the power-side of the resurrection means *conformity to death* for life to others.

" *Always delivered to death for Jesus' sake.*" " Oh," you say, " you are not putting before us the attractive side." But why do you always cry for what is " attractive " from the human view in following Christ ? Was Calvary in its reality *attractive ?* Was Christ " attractive " on His way to the Cross ? No, there was " no beauty " that we should desire

Him had we see Him then (Isaiah liii. 2). But for the " joy set before Him He endured the Cross, and *despised the shame* ". If our eyes were opened by the Holy Ghost to the divine vision of the suffering Lord, we should see beauty in the Lamb-spirit of Jesus. We should see the heavenly side of fellowship with Christ in His death-path and count it joy to follow in His steps. We should then crave to " suffer with Him " because thus, and only thus, we will be " glorified together " (Romans viii. 17). " It is a faithful saying, ' If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.' *If we suffer*, we shall also reign with Him " (2 Timothy ii. 11, 12).

But what is the meaning of being " *delivered* unto death " ? The Lord was " *delivered* for our offences ". The Father " *delivered* Him up for us all ". " He was *delivered* into the hands of men." The Greek word means to be " handed over ". It is the very word in Galatians ii. 20, where it says He gave Himself for us. Literally it reads, " He loved me, and *gave Himself over* for me ". He gave Himself over to the executioners for me; He gave Himself over to death for me. The Father gave Him over to the hands of the executioners; to the will of the Gentiles, and the Jewish rulers. " He was *delivered up*." Again and again we read " when the time was come that He should be *delivered up* ". This is one aspect of the life of Jesus to be manifested in our mortal body. He calls us to be willing to be " given over unto death for Jesus' sake ", as He was delivered up for us. We need vision beyond that of personal comfort, joy, happiness, ecstasy. We want " power " not only to be witnesses, *but to be martyrs*. Power to be willing to be " delivered up to the hands of men "; and power to hand ourselves over to the will of God, for life to others—" delivered unto death for Jesus' sake ".

" *Always* delivered to death," " always handed over to death." What instruments may God use for bringing about this fellowship with Christ ? " And brother shall hand over brother to death " (Matthew x. 21). Read again Matthew xxiv. 9. " Then shall they *deliver you up to* tribulation, and shall kill you; and ye shall be *hated*." Oh ! children of God,

are you willing to be hated ? or is there something in you that smarts, and bursts out in resentment ? Then you have not learned Calvary, and the " fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death ".

" *And they shall kill you.*" There are many ways of " killing ", beside the using of a knife. " They shall *hate* you." Yes, when the message of God has been wrought into you it becomes the " Sword of the Spirit ", piercing to the " joints and marrows " of others, and they may resent it, and turn upon you as they turned upon Jeremiah, and cast him out.

We have been softening the message of the Cross, and trying to adapt its language to twentieth century sentiment; but now that time is passing. If we are faithful, the *edge of the Cross will be felt*, whether we will or no. " *Brother* shall deliver up brother to death." Are you willing for your sister or brother in the home to " deliver you to death " by injustice and misjudgment, and you meet it with a Calvary spirit ? In 1 Peter iv. 19, we read, " Let them that suffer according to the will of God keep *handing over* their souls to Him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator." " For we which are always delivered—handed over—to death for Jesus' sake."

" *We which live.*" LIVE. Here we have life in the midst of death. The divine life in you cannot be crushed, but as " bread corn is bruised " it will break out into fragrance and life power in the face of everything; and everything that is not of God the sooner it perishes the better. The true life of God in us will stand every fiery test. But the " life of Jesus " truly in you may be almost unrealised and unseen, because it has no outlet, and because the exterior vessel has never been broken. It is for this reason that we are " *Always delivered to death* ". It is only those who *live*—who have the real life of Jesus in them in union with Him in His risen life—which is the life He had out of death—who are " delivered to death ", so that the life which is in them may be " manifested ". Without the " death working " in the outer man, this life is compressed within rigid circumference. It cannot

find outlet. " Give, and it shall be given unto you; pressed down and running over."

Soul in the path of pressure and trial, *begin to give to others*, and cease thinking of yourself and your own needs. See your place in the death of Christ, and say, " I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me ". Then say, " I am willing to be always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus may be manifested. I will not ask to be taken out of the path of trial; out of the hands of men; I will not ask to be free from the cruel hands that are pressing and trying me; I will only ask that the life of Jesus in me may break out and triumph in them." " We who *live* are always delivered to death." Who does the " handing over " ? The hand that was pierced on Calvary —the hand of the Lord. You say, " Then what have I to do with it ? " You must *choose*, for you may rebel. Your part is to accept the path, and choose to be handed over to fellowship with the death of Christ, and then He Who died and rose again will say, " I will show him what great things he shall suffer for My Name's sake ".

What is the outcome of being handed over to death ? " Always delivered to death that the life of Jesus *might be manifested in our mortal body*." It has to do with the mortal body. The life of Jesus manifested in our *mortal* body. This clearly shows that it is a path of death for the outer man, so that the life in him may have an outlet, or be " manifested " —seen. And the outcome of this is for blessing to others. " So then death worketh in us, and life in you." Death *worketh* ! So there is a " working " of death in the believer. Death *worketh*, and as the death works, so life reaches others.

You are living in the midst of people who are in the dark about Calvary. Why is it that you cannot speak the message to them ? Because *it is not manifested in your own life*. There must be first the apprehension of identification; and then the intelligent, deliberate surrender to God to be " delivered to death " in any way that He chooses, so that death may work in us for the life of Christ to reach others. This is what

has been described by a writer as the " Sacrificial path of God's elect ". The path of David and Jeremiah and all the prophets. This is the path for the proclamation of the Calvary message to-day, as it was the path for the foretelling of it in David's day. The path that means being willing for your brother to hand you over to death, in the twenteith century way. A " death " which is not a " death " of the body, but is realised in a refined cruelty, in ostracism and misjudgment, because you are faithful to God. " *For Thy sake are we killed all the day long,*" said Paul, " we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter . . . in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us."

God grant that our minds may be open to this message, so that the Holy Spirit can penetrate them with His truth, so that we shall be ready to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Can you say, " Yes, I live; I know I live with Christ in His divine life, and I see now before me the path which God has been leading me into for some time, and I have been struggling against it. I have been resenting it. I have been saying, ' No, we have done with the Cross; I do not believe that we are to hear so much about the Cross. I do not want it. But I am ready to face it now '." " *Through the Eternal Spirit* He offered Himself to God." " He *stedfastly* set His face to go to Jerusalem." Will you take these words now, " delivered unto death ", " delivered up," and say, " Yes Lord, yes Lord, for life to others " ? Will you give up seeking anything for yourself ? " Yes Lord, let others obtain what I would like to have." Will you choose the path of death that others may have life ? Will you choose to fill up the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake ?

But what does it mean ? It means living, weeping, suffering, loving with infinite patience, infinite tenderness, unwearying love for every member of the whole Body of Christ. It means the being bound up, not in your " own " progress, but in the progress of the Body of Christ. It means sinking all the personal element in the service of God, wanting neither credit, nor notice, nor recognition. It means an utter dropping of

yourself, and a handing over of yourself to God to be poured out for His Body's sake, the Church—for Jesus Christ's sake (Colossians i. 24).

So I would tenderly put this message before you, child of God, and ask you to face it with the Lord, and in Jesus' Name let the Holy Spirit work in you all that He sees you can bear in fellowship with Him. Do you say "Yes"? Then do not take the pattern from anyone else, for God will deal with you as though there were no other person in the world but you. He will find a way of taking you into fellowship with Himself.

Maybe God is preparing us for something that is coming. The days are rapidly closing. How many of us will be found faithful? How many of us will be true to God? How many of us will stand the test? England needs martyrs, and England is having her martyrs in many secret lives of God's children. Right over the land there are deep, true souls who are learning the power of their lives to be in suffering for the Body of Christ.

All over England in her darkness at the present time, God is maturing in a furnace many souls who will shine as gold in the day of His appearing. Let us choose this path of giving ourselves over to the hand of God, to be handed over to the fellowship of His Son, for the manifestation of His life, and the outflow of His life to others.

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